



Drought Information Statement for Central North Carolina

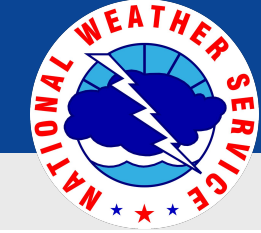
Valid March 12, 2026

Issued By: NWS Raleigh

Contact Information:

- This Drought Information Statement will be updated by March 26, 2026.
- Please see all currently available products at <https://drought.gov/drought-information-statements>.
- Please visit <https://www.weather.gov/RAH/DroughtInformationStatement> for previous statements.
- Questions or comments can be sent to barrett.smith@noaa.gov
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- Extreme Drought (D3) persists in the southern Piedmont and northern Coastal Plain areas of North Carolina.
- Severe Drought (D2) continues across the rest of central North Carolina, except for an area from the Sandhills into the Piedmont where conditions have improved to Moderate Drought (D1).





Current Drought Conditions

March 12, 2026
2:35 PM EDT

Graphic Courtesy of the North Carolina State Climate Office

North Carolina Drought Update

Created By: North Carolina Drought Management Advisory Council
www.ncdrought.org

NORTH CAROLINA CLIMATE OFFICE NC STATE
climate.ncsu.edu @NCSCO

For the assessment period ending **Mar. 10, 2026**
From the US Drought Monitor, with input from the NC DMAC

The Main Takeaway

Despite a dry week in many areas, drought conditions are largely unchanged, as the lingering moisture from February's rain events has stabilized most water levels.

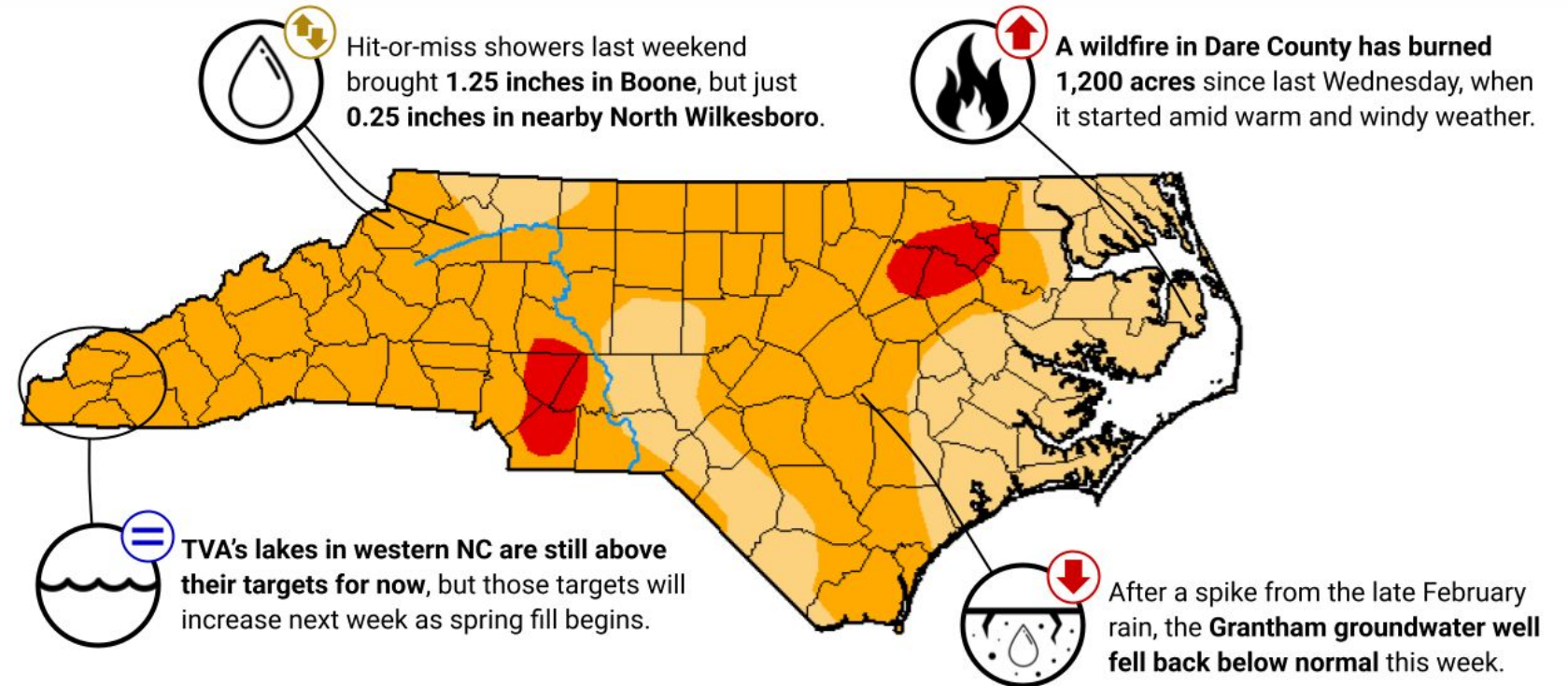
This Week's Summary

Spring has decidedly sprung, with 80-degree weather and scattered showers and storms over the past week. That rainfall pattern meant a few areas received an inch or more, but many areas missed out and had less than half an inch. The most apparent difference this week was the amount of trees budding and flowers blooming, which will increase their moisture demands.

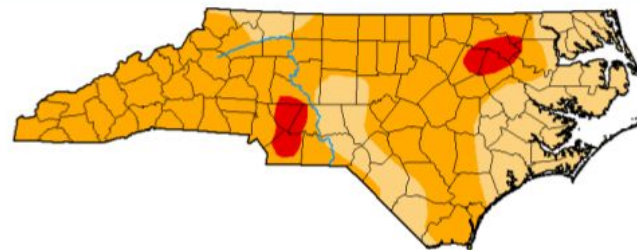
Next Week's Outlook

A pair of cold fronts moving through on Thursday and Monday will bring more showers and thunderstorms, with weekly rainfall totals of a half inch or more likely.

For your local drought status, visit www.ncdrought.org



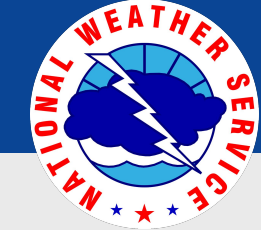
Last Week's Drought Status



Statewide Coverage by Category

Category	Current Coverage	Change Since Last Week
D0: Abnormally Dry	0.00%	0.00%
D1: Moderate Drought	29.84%	-0.17%
D2: Severe Drought	65.91%	+0.17%
D3: Extreme Drought	4.25%	0.00%
D4: Exceptional Drought	0.00%	0.00%

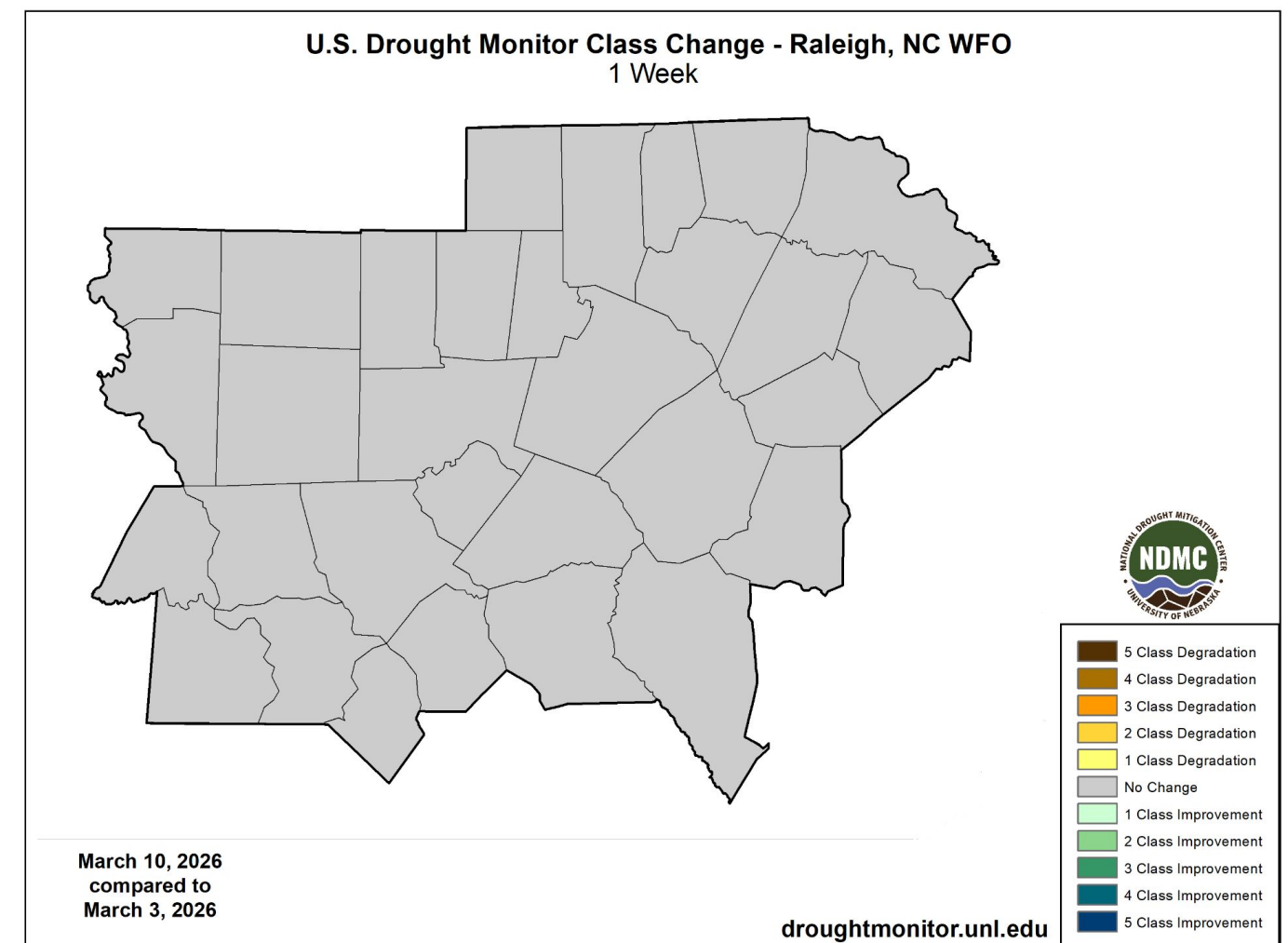
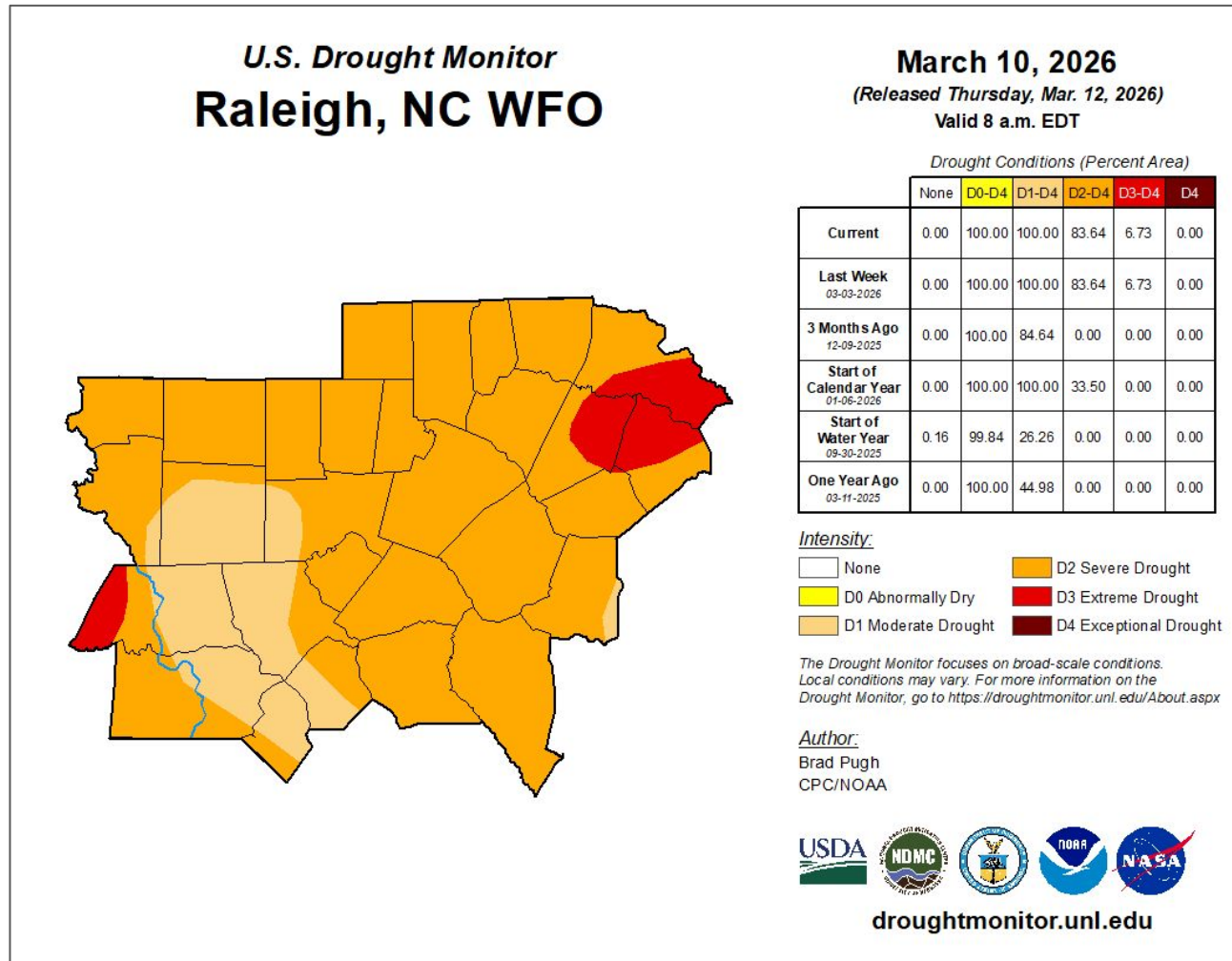




Current Drought Conditions

March 12, 2026
2:35 PM EDT

Latest U.S. Drought Monitor Map and One-Week Change



Main Takeaways

- Extreme Drought (D3) continues across portions of the northern Coastal Plain and southern Piedmont.
- Severe Drought (D2) continues elsewhere, although there has been some improvement from Scotland to Randolph Counties.

Image Caption:
 Left: [U.S. Drought Monitor valid 8am March 10th.](#)
 Right: [U.S. Drought Monitor 1-week change map valid 8am March 10th.](#)





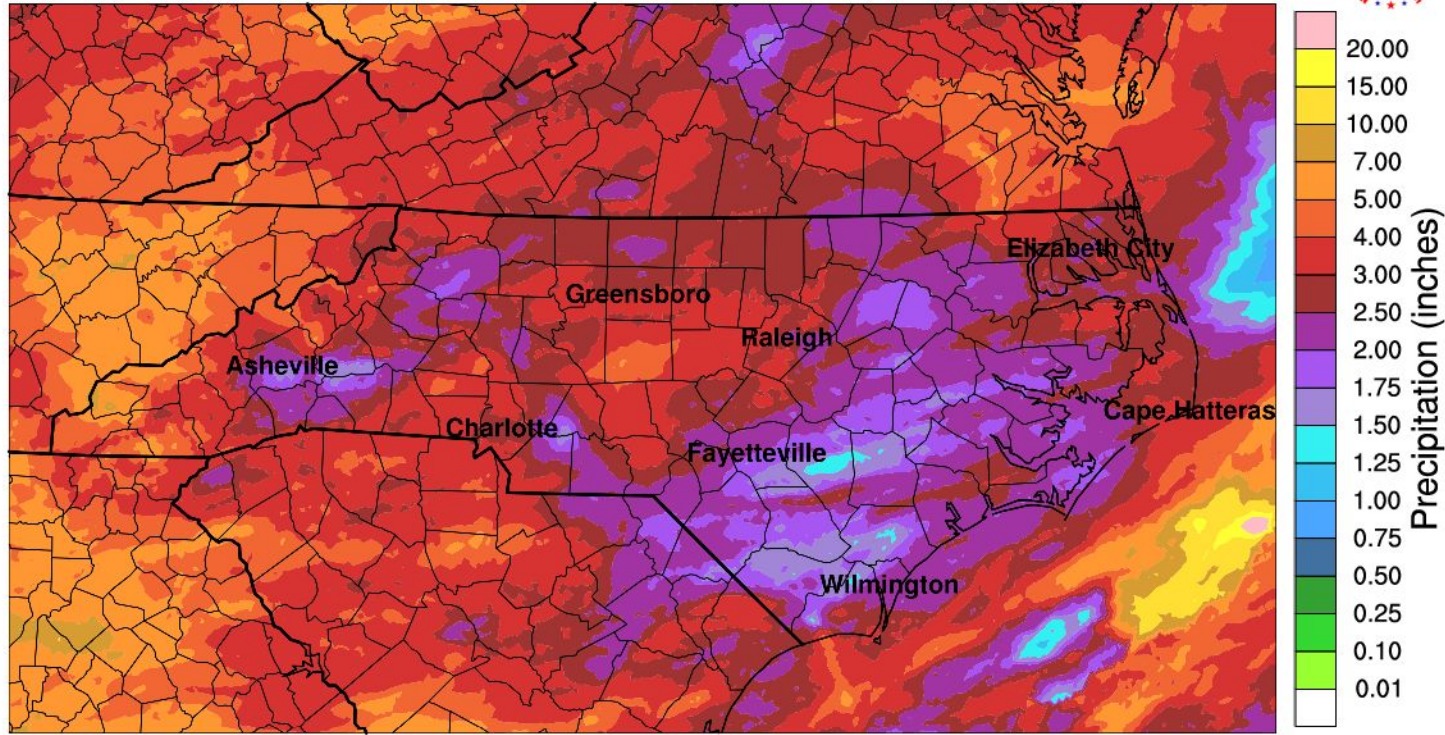
Observed Precipitation

March 12, 2026
2:35 PM EDT

Latest 30-Day Precipitation and Percent of Normal Precipitation

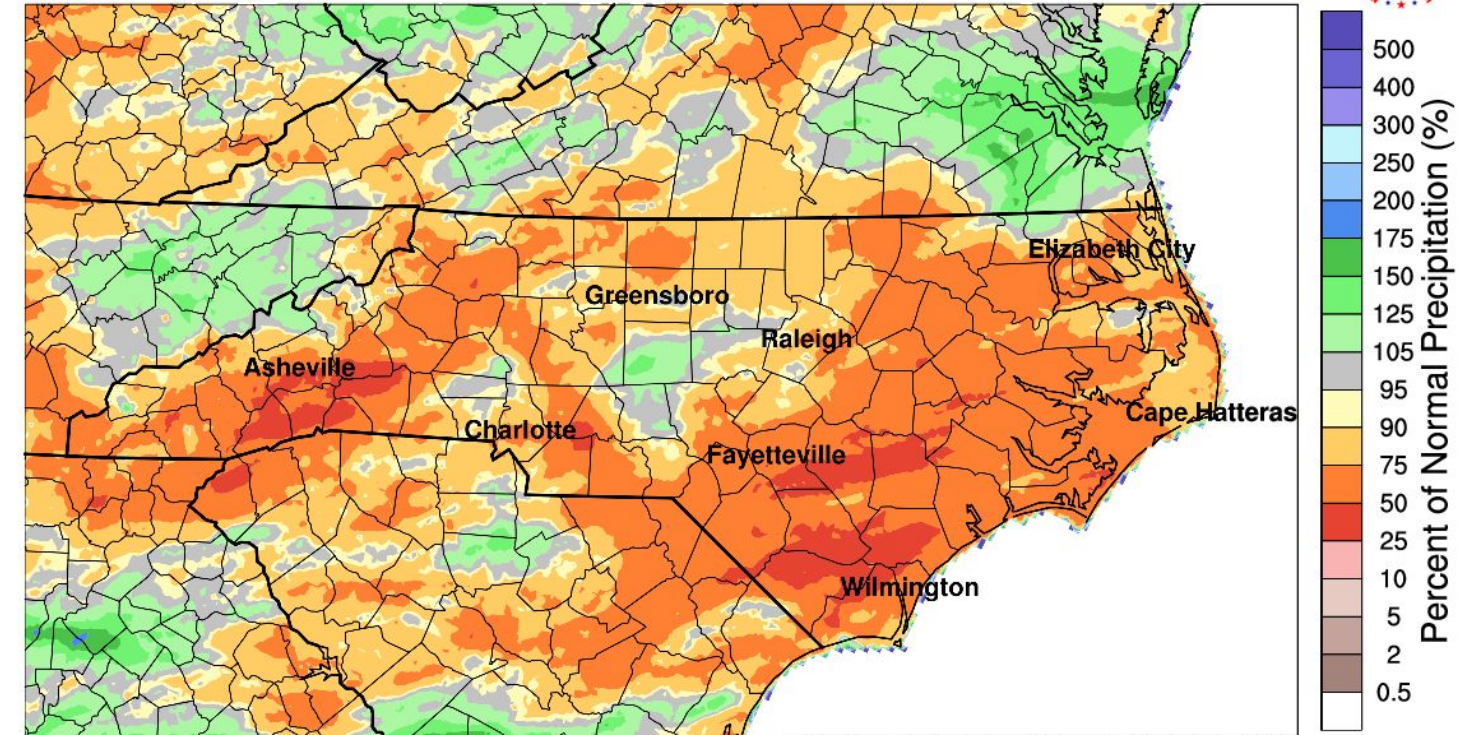
NWPS 30-Day Observed Precipitation

Valid: 8 AM EDT Thursday March 12, 2026



NWPS 30-Day Observed Percent of Normal Precipitation

Valid: 8 AM EDT Thursday March 12, 2026



Main Takeaways

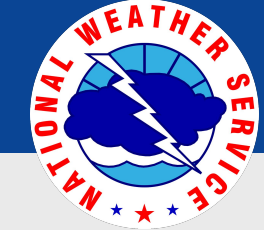
- Most of Central NC has seen below normal rainfall since mid February, and some areas of eastern NC have seen significantly below normal rainfall.
- Additional statistics → [Local Rainfall Summary](#)

Past 90 Days Stats	Observed Precipitation	Departure From Normal	Percent of Normal
Raleigh-Durham	5.43	-4.48	55%
Greensboro	7.31	-2.23	77%
Fayetteville	4.64	-4.34	52%

Image Captions:

Left - 30 Day Observed Precipitation for NC; Right - Percent of Normal Precipitation for NC
Data Courtesy NWS National Water Prediction Service.





Precipitation Forecast

March 12, 2026
2:35 PM EDT

Latest 7-Day Precipitation Forecast

- **Next 7 days:**
 - A frontal system today may provide up to one inch of rain in some areas of the Piedmont.
 - Additional showers and storms are expected Sunday through Monday from a second system.
 - Neither system is forecast to bring sufficient rainfall for significant drought improvement, but near normal rainfall should prevent further worsening of conditions.

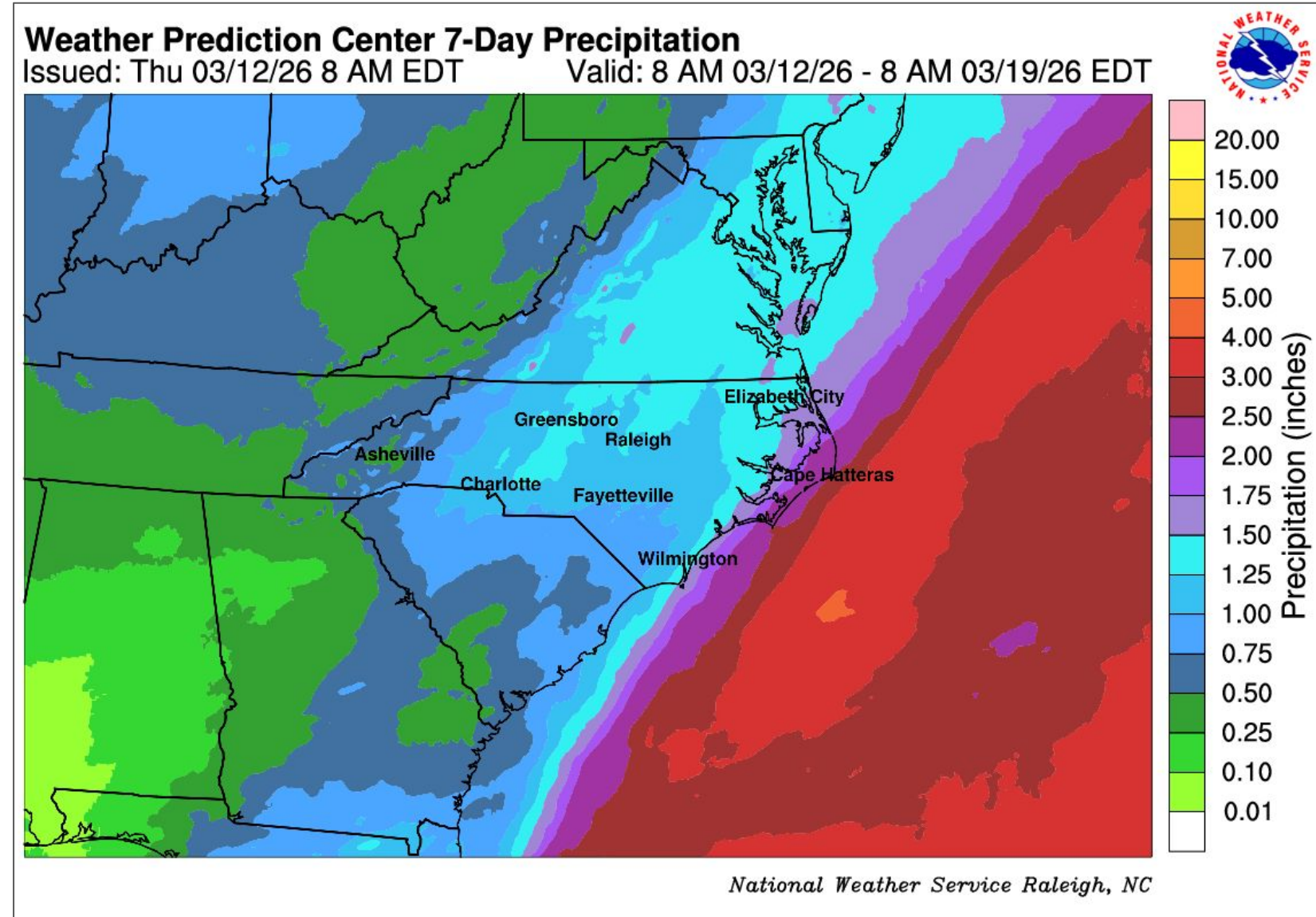


Image Caption: Weather Prediction Center [7-day precipitation forecast](#) valid March 12th to March 19th,





8-14 Day Outlook

March 12, 2026
2:35 PM EDT

Temperature and Precipitation Outlook

Main Takeaways

- The Days 8-14 Outlooks favors above normal temperatures.
- There are slightly increased chances (33-40%) of below normal precipitation in Days 8-14.

Possible Impact

- Drought conditions are likely persist.

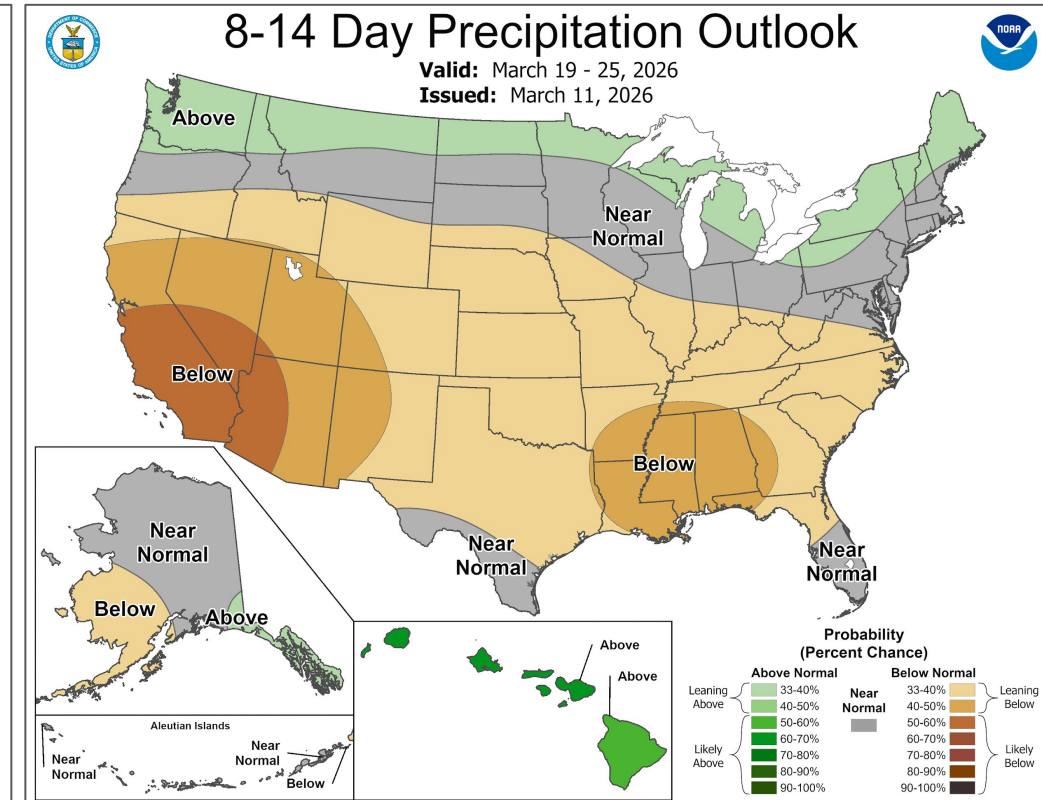
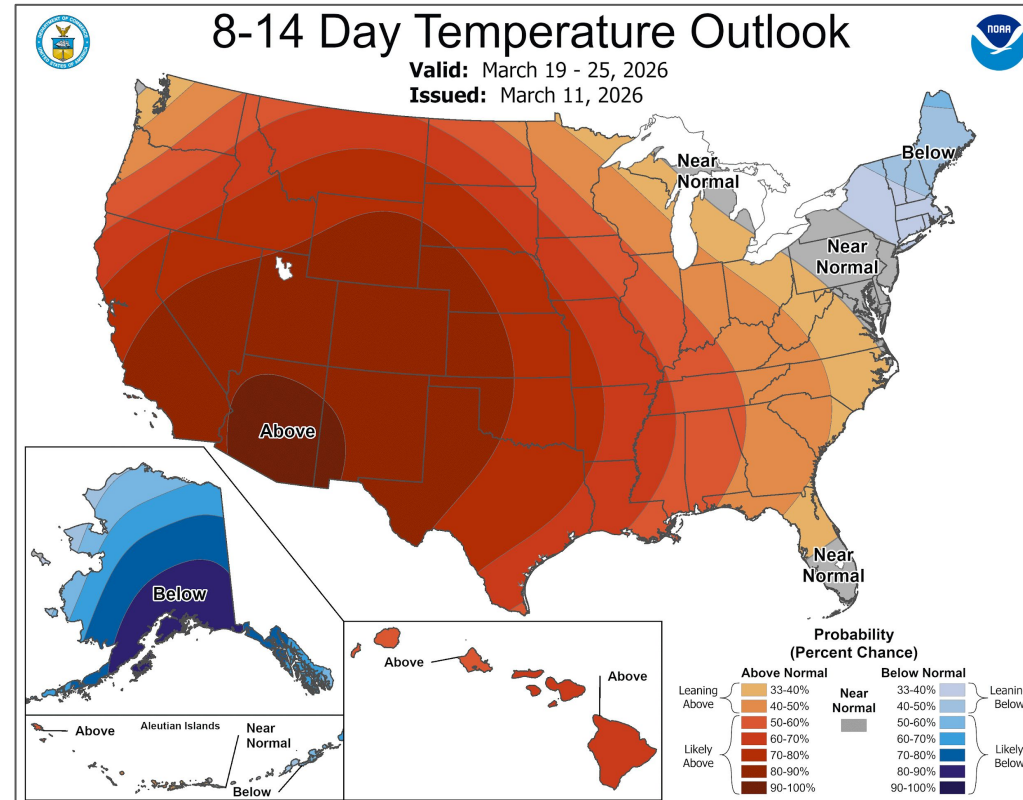


Image Captions:
 Left - [Climate Prediction Center 8-14 Day Temperature Outlook.](#)
 Right - [Climate Prediction Center 8-14 Day Precipitation Outlook.](#)
 Valid March 19 - March 25,, 2025





Weeks 3-4 Outlook

March 12, 2026
2:35 PM EDT

Temperature and Precipitation Outlook

Main Takeaways

- There are generally equal chances of above or below normal temperatures in late March and early April.
- Below normal precipitation is slightly favored.

Possible Impact

Longer range models suggest a warm pattern across the western US, with a general storm track through the Midwest. This pattern may result in additional rainfall deficits and continued or worsening of drought conditions in some areas.

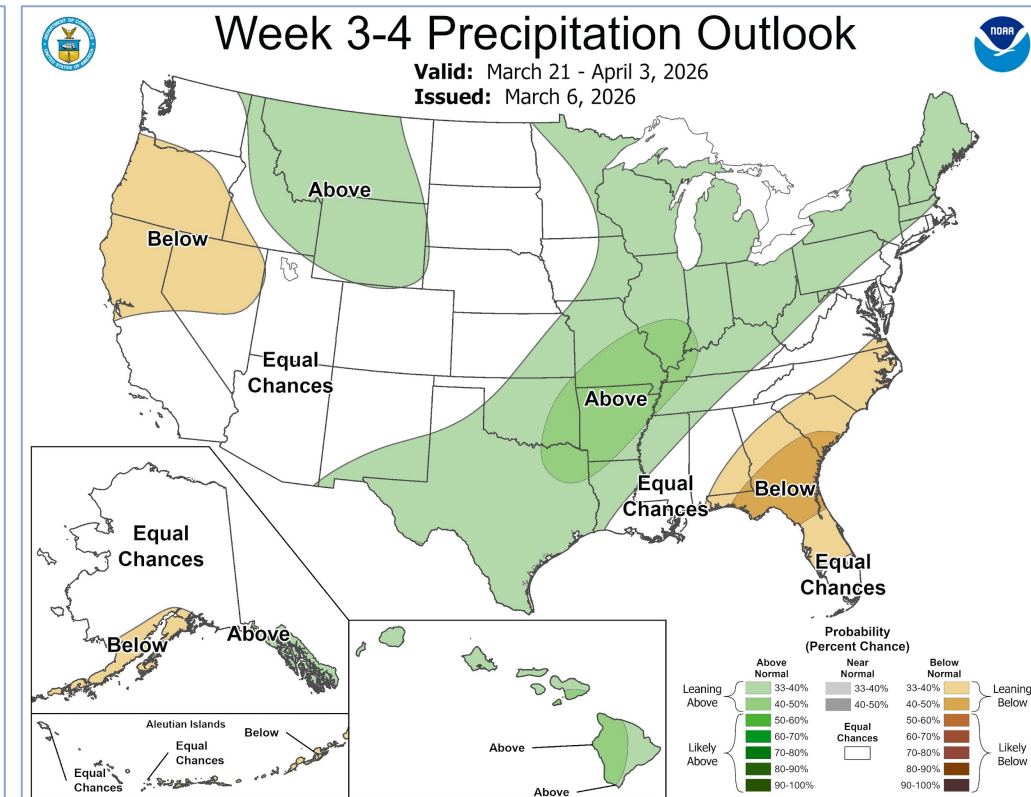
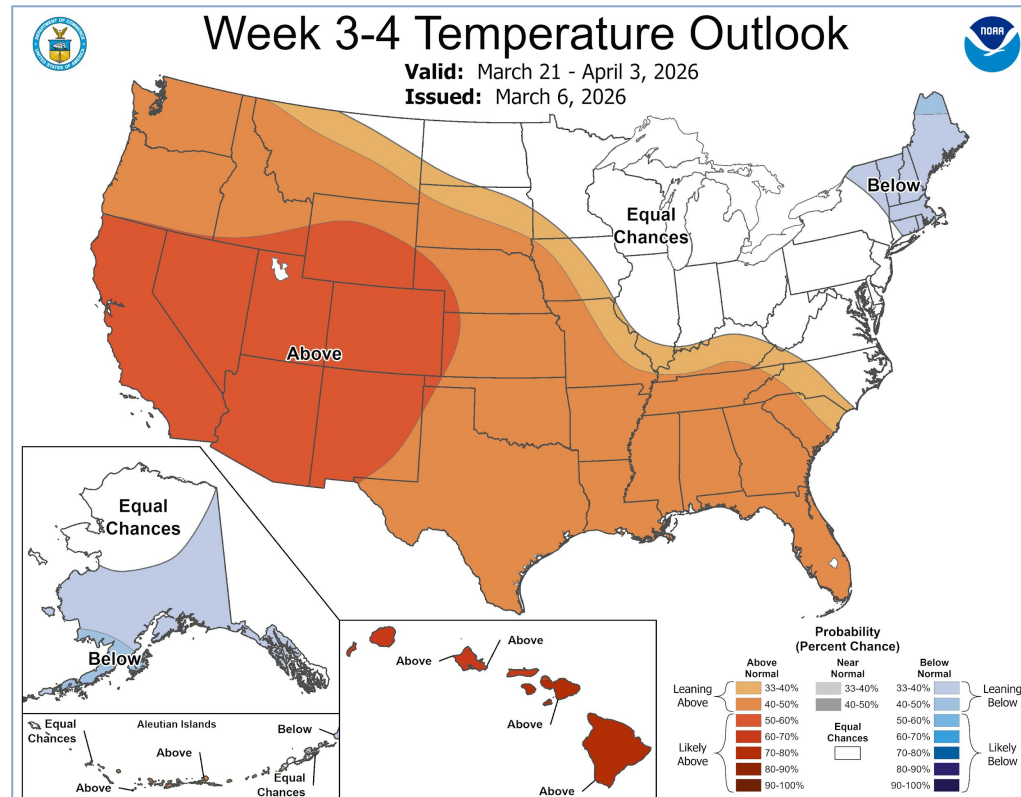


Image Captions:
 Left - [Climate Prediction Center Weeks 3-4 Temperature Outlook.](#)
 Right - [Climate Prediction Center Weeks 3-4 Precipitation Outlook.](#)
 Valid March 21 - April 3, 2026





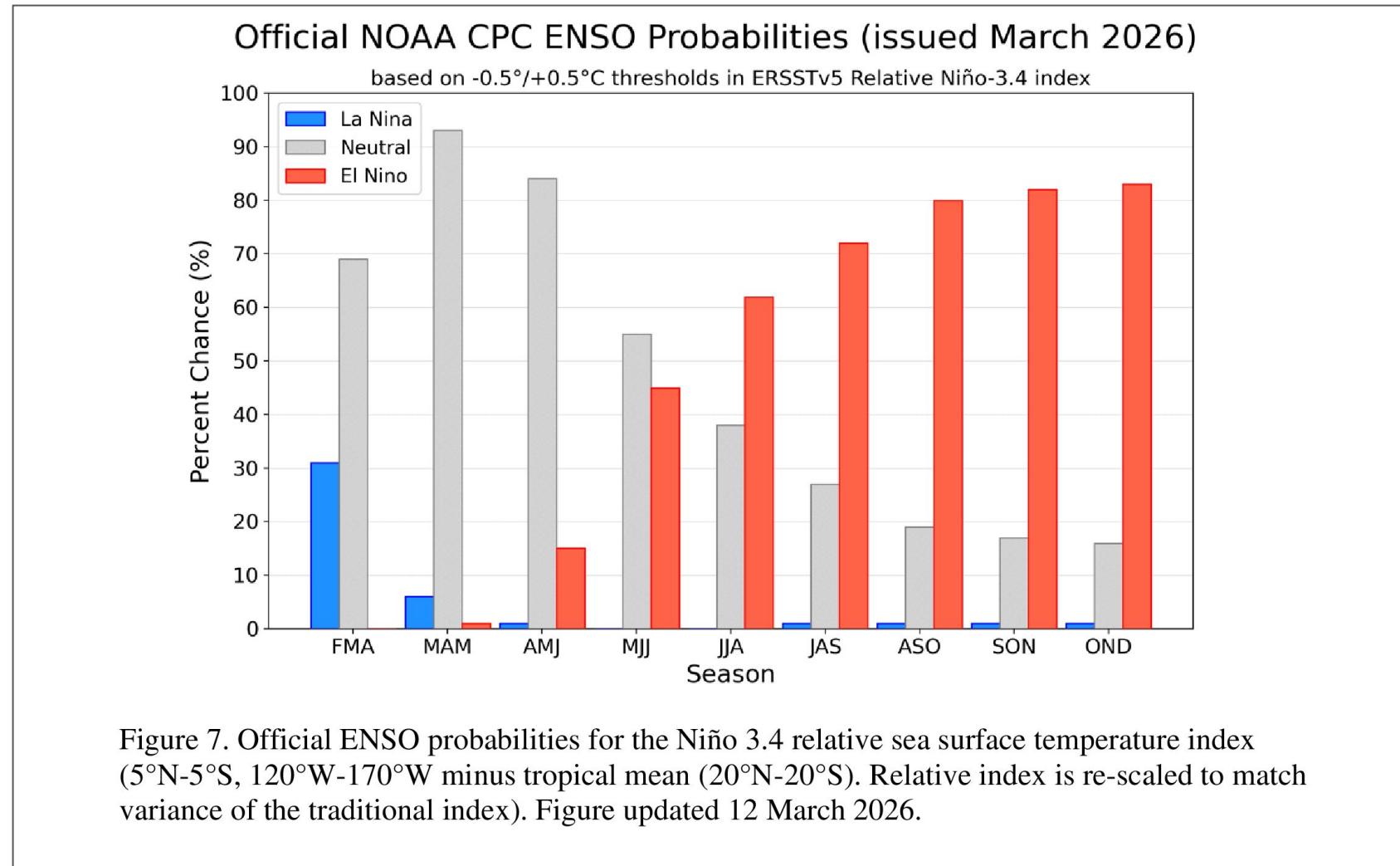
ENSO Forecast

March 3, 2026
2:03 PM EST

Courtesy of the Climate Prediction Center (www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov)

ENSO Alert System Status: **La Niña Advisory** / **El Niño Watch**

Synopsis: A transition from La Niña to ENSO-neutral is expected in the next month, with ENSO-neutral favored through May-July 2026 (55% chance). In June-August 2026, El Niño is likely to emerge (62% chance) and persist through at least the end of 2026.





Seasonal (3-Month) Outlooks

March 12, 2026
2:35 PM EDT

Seasonal Temperature/Precipitation and Drought Outlooks

Main Takeaways

- There is a slight lean toward above normal temperatures across the southeast U.S. heading into spring.
- There are equal chances of above or below normal precipitation.
- Drought is expected to persist across central NC into spring.

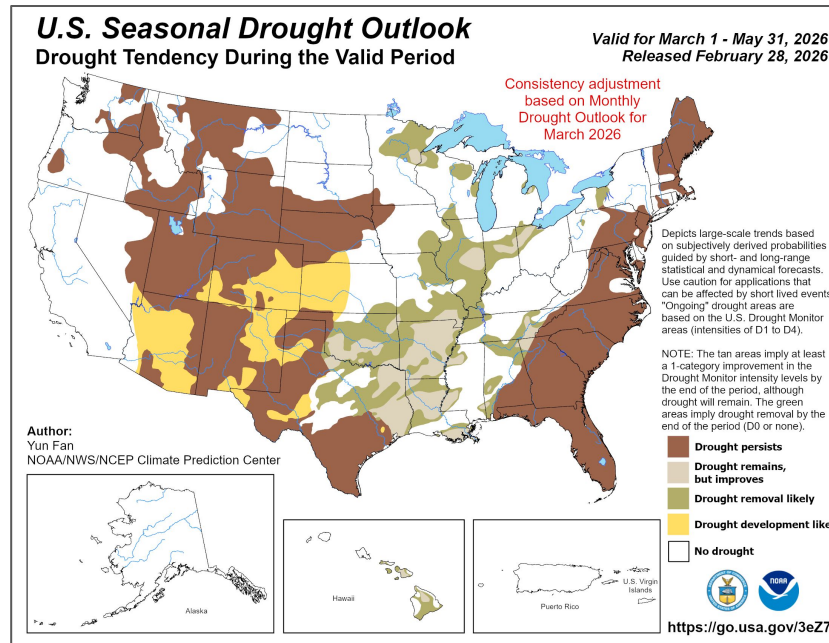
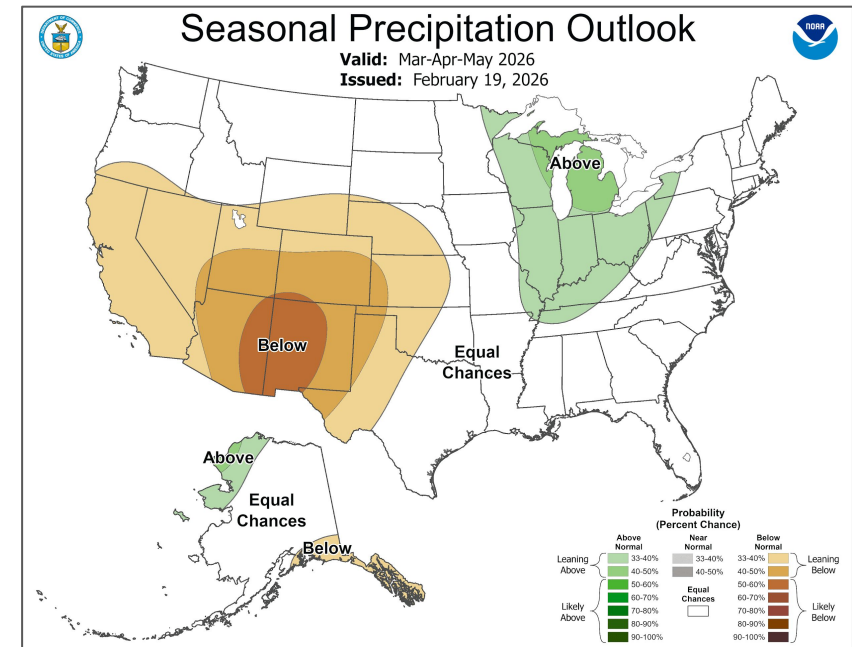
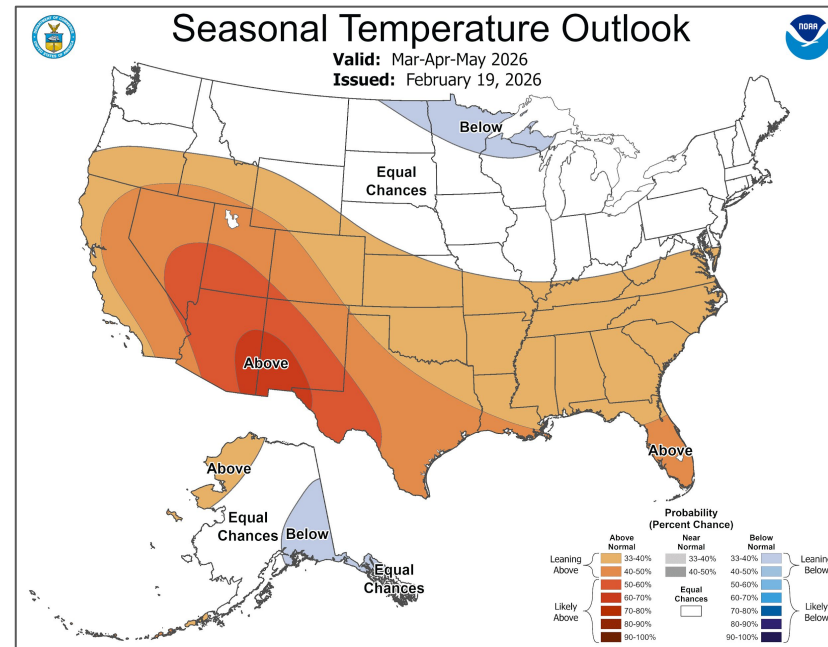


Image Captions:
[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Temperature Outlook.](#)
[Climate Prediction Center Seasonal Precipitation Outlook.](#)
 Valid March to May, 2026.

